

10-1966

## Especially for Homemakers

Candace Hurley  
*Iowa State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/farmscience>



Part of the [Agriculture Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hurley, Candace (1966) "Especially for Homemakers," *Iowa Farm Science*: Vol. 21 : No. 4 , Article 4.  
Available at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/farmscience/vol21/iss4/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension and Experiment Station Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Iowa Farm Science by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [digirep@iastate.edu](mailto:digirep@iastate.edu).



## LIVABLE HOMES FOR BUSY FAMILIES

This is the time of year when most of us are settling into that "back to normal" routine at work, or school, or in community activities. We talk about how busy we are.

It is precisely because we are busy families that we need to re-examine what we mean by a livable home in today's terms. When we think of livability we usually think of the physical structure of the house, the furnishings it has, and the arrangement and attractiveness of the setting. It's possible also to think of livability as meaning year 'round temperature control, built-in conveniences, and push-button housekeeping.

### **Sod Huts to Split Levels**

There is another quality of livableness. Let's call it livableness for the personal development and fulfillment of each member of the family. This leads us back to the real meaning of home life. People build homes *but, more importantly, homes build people.*

This role of today's home goes beyond providing warmth and shelter and the conveniences of everyday living—essential as these are. It is in the home that members of the family renew their strengths and their values, then march out to meet the next day's demands. Here in the home, they must find their individual capabilities and sense their personal worth. But this comes about only when we focus first on each person's special interests, talents, and abilities and furnish our homes to let these develop.

### **A New Dimension in Living**

It's interesting, isn't it, that the appearance of our homes today,

aside from modern conveniences, isn't much different from the home of 100 years ago. We have split levels and ranch houses where log cabins or sod huts once stood—but the same essentials are there.

But families aren't different, you reply. No. But living for families is. Lawrence K. Frank, the author of "Nature and Human Nature: Man's Image of Himself," puts it this way:

"Today we live more and more in the public world. We work in factories, stores, offices, public utilities, and service-rendering organizations; our children spend even more time at school, in recreational and youth organizations and playgrounds and camps. Thus more of our waking hours are spent in the public world, which means that the home should become a source of what men, women, adolescents, and children need and cannot find elsewhere—what they require in order to sustain them in these varied public and group experiences."

And he adds—

"The home, as it seems to be emerging, is becoming a place

where members of a family can find not only 'togetherness' but also opportunities to be, and to live, as unique individuals. . . . For the first time, except for the highly privileged elite of former ages, the home is becoming an instrument for family living and personality development, the morale building, the relaxation, the companionship and, let me emphasize, the privacy which we all need to carry on in the exhausting but tension building, often demoralizing and depressing public life in which we all must participate."

Our homes will not lose all their traditional functions and responsibilities. We wouldn't expect them to. But we need to recognize that we want more from our homes today than a structure or a roomful of coordinated furniture.

How do we measure this new quality of livability and introduce it into our homes and lives? Perhaps we first need to recognize what we seek—tranquility, relaxation, opportunity to pursue our own individual interests as well as share family interests and activities.

This is not a matter of interior decoration—having the latest in ultra-modern furniture and the most coordinated color scheme. It's a matter of planning, pushing and shoving your house into shape to fit your family's individual needs.

What are these needs? We can't list them for your individual family, but we can list needs of everyone—man, woman or child—at some time or other.

*Especially for...*  
 **HOMEMAKERS**

\* the need to get away from it all once in a while—to have some peace and quiet—to have a spot to just sit and meditate, relax, un-jangle our nerves.

\* the need to be together as a family, too, in relaxed surroundings sometimes—in exciting surroundings other times.



\* the need to pursue our own interests as individuals—develop our own achievements.

\* the need to be able to carry our living work load with the least amount of interference, frustration, and confusion but with an appreciable amount of family sharing.

Let's take these one at a time and see how our houses today measure up to these sorts of needs.

### **Plan for Solitude**

Where do you go in today's homes planned for "open living" to be alone? The stereo with its sometimes overpowering teen-style recordings echoes through the living room—the family room blasts forth TV times for the younger set—the kitchen clatter and motors disturb the peace there—the tiny bedrooms offer only sleeping space. The bathroom, many times, gives the only assurance of complete privacy.

Sometimes the old-time house with its many cut-up rooms that offered doors to be closed gave us more privacy—more chance of escape than our spacious plans of today. The two stories offered a stairway to a sanctum of peace and quiet when the going got rough.

What can we do in today's home to offer a spot of seclusion for family members? Here are a few suggestions. You'll think of more.

—Add a comfortable chair with a possible footrest in each bedroom. Combine a reading light and some good books or magazines with it. Solitude and enrichment will take over from there.



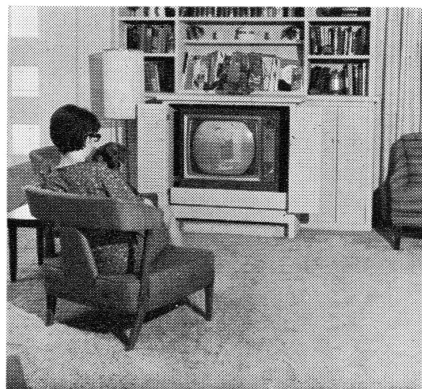
—Move stereo to the room of the greatest music lover.

—Shove TV and its followers to the basement.

—Check motor noise of equipment before you buy and plan its placement and use accordingly. Can it be behind closed doors, in the basement, or used at a time when family members aren't disturbed by its whirring, thumping, or grinding?

### **And "Togetherness," Too**

Planned "togetherness" is sometimes hard to achieve, too, with the



**A pleasant area for reading or watching television. But what if family members disagree on which to do?**

many activities all ages are involved in today. But your house can invite family activities—both calm and rollicking—by furnishing these ways:

—Placing living room furniture in groupings so conversation is stimulated and easy.

—A pleasant eating center in or near the kitchen but out of the path of the cook that invites sitting a spell whether it's mealtime or not.

—A formal dining room where traditional and elegant family meals can be planned for special occasions.



**It's tough for Dad to work on his record books with television going. Solution: TV to the basement, or a truly private corner for Dad's work.**

—A worship center in a quiet spot.

—A usable fireplace where corn popping, marshmallow roasting, or just plain flame-watching can be done.

—A music center conducive to family community singing.



—A quiet play spot always ready for a family card game, parcheesi, checkers, or chess.

—Or an active play spot with equipment for shuffleboard, table tennis, or billiards.

### Hobbies, Everyone?

How can your house help family members pursue and develop new talents? By opening its doors to opportunity and recognition of individual interests and achievements. Here are ways and means:

—Bulletin boards or display centers in every bedroom to show off interests.



—A private work center located where no one will disturb a creation in the making—where tools and equipment can be at hand for the creator to start where he left off—where storage for tools for the job can be assembled within easy reach. This should apply to everyone regardless of his hobby of the moment. It could be:

- \* Father with his workshop,
- \* Mother with her sewing center,

- \* Bud with his motor building,
- \* Sis with her painting,
- \* Buster with his model building,
- \* And toddler with her toys.

—A spot in the house for family appreciation of everyone's creation.

### A Pathway for Living

Living isn't all easy. There's work to be done by everyone to make the physical needs of food, shelter, and clothing come true. Two things interfere the most with getting these jobs done — confusion and clutter. How can your house help avoid these?

How would you like to drive a car if there were no planned highways — no caution signs — no stop signs—plus no "do not litter" laws?

Yet that's what we expect our families to do in a house that's not planned for "traffic lanes" and "dumpgrounds." They have to dodge around poorly placed furniture, come to a screeching halt to avoid a hot load in the kitchen, pick their way through people conversing to reach their destination, and toss their litter all along the way.

You can install a highway system in your house by providing:

\* A "dumpgrounds" for outdoor wraps at the entry ways, for school books at the entry ways, for groceries by the refrigerator, for soiled clothes in each person's room, for mending that needs to be done, for ironing right off the board, for keys handy for the keeper, for mail where all can check, for bills—paid and unpaid.

\* A planned traffic pattern so work may proceed without interruption of non-stop hustlers going through. Aids here might be the U-shaped kitchen, the rear central hall, or the arrangement of furniture to form convenient traffic lanes.

So — whether you're building a new house, remodeling one, or just rearranging your present one—analyze your family needs first. Of course, they'll be changing from time to time, but your house plan should not be so static that it can't change with the times. Plan for your needs—for some chance for solitude—for some togetherness—for some spot for talents—for an organized working-living pattern.

—Emelda Kunau

Note: *Iowa Farm Science* invites you to share with us your ideas on how you have brought this new quality of livability into your home.



People built this handsome home. But the home, its interior layout, its facilities for privacy, and its provisions for shared activities will, in a sense, help to build the little girl.